

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 16-23 were pending in the Application, with claims 1-15 and 24-32 having been withdrawn. By this Amendment, claims 16 is being amended to improve its form, and new claims 33-37 are being added, to advance the prosecution of the application. No new matter is involved.

Claim 16 defines a method of manufacturing a liquid crystal display panel which includes the steps of disposing a thermosetting seal material in the peripheral region of the display area, disposing a thermally conductive buffer plate and heating and curing the thermosetting seal material while applying a pressure from the outer surface of the display panel. As amended herein, the step of disposing a thermally conductive buffer plate recites "at each of two sides of outer surfaces of said pair of substrates of said display panel body, aligned such that an opening formed in said buffer plates each provided on said two sides of said outer surfaces of said pair of substrates overlaps the display area of said display panel body". New claim 34 which is an independent claim defines a method of manufacturing a liquid crystal display panel in similar terms. The language of claim 16 as amended and as set forth in new claim 34 corresponds to the description in the specification that a buffer plate is disposed on each of two sides of outer surfaces of the pair of substrates, with an opening formed in the buffer plate overlapping the display region of the display panel body.

New claims 33 and 37 depend from and further define claims 16 and 34 respectively in terms of the pair of substrates being affixed to each other with the predetermined gap without a spacer. This is described at line 9 of page 13 through line 19 of page 14 of the specification.

As defined in claim 16, a buffer plate is provided on each of two outer surfaces of the pair of substrates of the display panel body. In addition, an opening

is provided in the region of the buffer plate corresponding to the display region of the display panel. In other words, a buffer plate having a corresponding opening is provided at each of the top and bottom of a display panel body.

Beginning on page 3 of the Office Action, claims 16, 17 and 20-23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 5,677,749 of Tsubota, et al. in view of U.S. Patent 6,222,603 of Sakai, et al. Beginning on page 4 of the Office Action, claims 18 and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tsubota, et al. in view of Sakai, et al. and further in view of U.S. Patent 3,655,477 of Scholl, et al. These rejections are respectively traversed, particularly in view of the amendments to claim 16 being made herein.

The references of Tsubota, et al. and Sakai, et al. have been carefully reviewed. Neither reference discloses a structure in which a buffer plate having an opening is provided on each of top and bottom (two sides of outer surfaces) of a pair of substrates forming a display panel body. More specifically, in Tsubota and Sakai, the elastic sheet or buffer member is only provided on one of the surfaces of the pair of substrates forming the panel, and no buffer plate is provided on the other substrate. Moreover, there is no description in Tsubota or Sakai of providing an opening in the buffer plate corresponding to the display region of the panel. When the buffer plates each having an opening corresponding to the display region are not provided at both of the top and bottom of the pair of substrates, it is not possible to affix a pair of substrates with an accurate gap without a spacer. In the cited references, there is no description of how a pair of substrates are fixed with an accurate gap without a spacer, and therefore, the present invention cannot be viewed as obvious from such references.

The Scholl reference relates to a technical field which completely differs from a display device, and, therefore, a person with ordinary skill in the art would not be

Appl. No. 09/917,099
Amdt. Dated April 25, 2005
Reply to Office Action of January 11, 2005

Attorney Docket No. 81784.0240
Customer No.: 26021

motivated to combine Scholl with Tsubota and Sakai. Moreover, even if the three references were combined, such combination would fail to disclose or even suggest provision of an opening in a region of the buffer plate corresponding to the display region, provision of buffer plates on both of the top and bottom of the pair of substrates (on two outer surfaces), and pressing from the outside.

Therefore, claims 16 and 34 are submitted to clearly distinguish patentably over the cited references. Claims 17-23 depend from and contain all of the limitations of claim 16, so that such claims are also submitted to clearly distinguish patentably over the art.

Similar comments apply to new claim 33 which depends from and contains all of the limitations of claim 16.

New claims 35-37 depend, directly or indirectly, from, and contain all of the limitations of independent claim 34, so that such claims are also submitted to clearly distinguish patentably over the references.

In conclusion, claims 16-23 and new claims 33-37 are submitted to clearly distinguish patentably over the cited references for the reason discussed above. Therefore, entry of this amendment under the provisions of 37 C.F.R. § 1.116 as placing the application in condition for allowance or alternatively in better form for appeal, and reconsideration and allowance in view thereof, are respectfully requested.

Appl. No. 09/917,099
Amdt. Dated April 25, 2005
Reply to Office Action of January 11, 2005

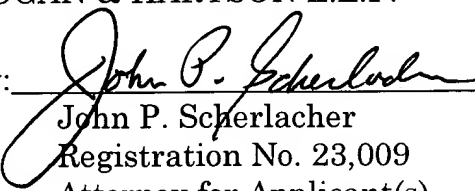
Attorney Docket No. 81784.0240
Customer No.: 26021

If there are any fees due in connection with the filing of this response, please charge the fees to our Deposit Account No. 50-1314.

Respectfully submitted,
HOGAN & HARTSON L.L.P.

Date: April 25, 2005

By: _____


John P. Scherlacher
Registration No. 23,009
Attorney for Applicant(s)

500 South Grand Avenue, Suite 1900
Los Angeles, California 90071
Phone: 213-337-6700
Fax: 213-337-6701